

**Ernest Skinner Property**  
**CH-758**  
**Marbury, MD**  
**Private**

**1906; 1926**

The Ernest Skinner Property consists of a simple 2-story frame Victorian-inspired dwelling in the village of Marbury. The house stands approximately 25 yards from the street at the intersection of Pisgah-Marbury Road (formerly New Cut Road) and Bicknell Road. Erected in 1906, and improved in 1926, the dwelling is adorned with an enclosed hipped-roof front porch, and a decorative center gable with a broken cornice. The latter is a distinctive variation of the Victorian center gable found on many examples in the western section of Charles County. The dwelling includes an overall T-plan with a 2-bay facade and a two story gable-roof service wing. Two well-preserved accessory building are also found on the site including an early 20th century garage and small chicken house.

Although the dwelling has been significantly altered, the Ernest Skinner Property is an example of a little understood regionally-distinctive Victorian treatment in Charles County. Furthermore, it is one of a number of historic resources in the Victorian village of Marbury which grew as a result of the establishment of the Naval Proving Ground in Indian Head.

Inventory No. CH-758

**1. Name of Property** (indicate preferred name)

historic	Ernest Skinner Property
other	

## 2. Location

street and number	4820 Bicknell Road	___	not for publication
city, town	Marbury	___	vicinity
county	Charles		

**3. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	Ester Memmer and Dennis Posey				
street and number	4820 Bicknell Road			telephone	301-743-2255
city, town	Marbury	state	MD	zip code	20658

#### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	20 p. 368
city, town	La Plata	liber	2515 folio 267

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report  
☐ Other

## 6. Classification

[illegible]

## 7. Description

Inventory No. CH-758

### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Ernest Skinner Property consists of a simple 2-story frame Victorian-inspired dwelling in the village of Marbury. The house stands approximately 25 yards from the street at the intersection of Pisgah-Marbury Road (formerly New Cut Road) and Bicknell Road. Erected in 1906, and improved in 1926, the dwelling is adorned with an enclosed hipped-roof front porch, and a decorative center gable with a broken cornice. The latter is a distinctive variation of the Victorian center-gable found on many examples in the western section of Charles County. The dwelling includes an overall T-plan with a 2-bay facade and a two story gable-roof service wing. One-story shed additions are found to the rear. Two well-preserved accessory building are also found on the site including an early 20th century garage and small chicken house.

The dwelling is covered in asbestos shingle siding over German wood siding and has an asphalt shingle roof. Original 2/2 windows are protected with metal screen windows. The front or west elevation includes two second story windows above two first floor windows flanking an offset center front door. The porch is supported by five Victorian turned posts, two of which are replacements originating from the adjacent property to the north. The porch has a concrete slab foundation.

The north elevation includes a late 20th century stone chimney replacing an earlier brick exterior chimney or interior flue. Octagonal windows have also been added to the second story of this elevation. The rear elevation includes a single second story window. The south elevation of the man block includes one second story and one first floor window centered under the apex.

The service addition includes a single centered second story window on the north and elevation, a single offset window on the rear elevation. The north elevation includes an early 20th century one-story shed addition with two pair of 2/2 windows. The rear shed additions appears to date from the late 20th century. The south elevation includes a single second story window and a paired likely replacement window on the first floor. A gable-roof covered well has been incorporated into the shed additions.

The original floorplan was a side hall composition, but like many other examples, the narrow partition wall has since been removed. The interior includes a fair amount of original woodwork including newel, 4-panele as well as 5-panel doors with original hardware.

A board and batten, shed roof chicken house stands some distance behind the house. One of the site's best preserved features is the c. 1930 front-gable garage with a metal roof, novelty siding and original double 6-light doors.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-758

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

**Specific dates** 1906

**Architect/Builder** Unknown

**Construction dates** 1906

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Erected circa 1906, although the dwelling has been significantly altered, the Ernest Skinner Property is an example of a little understood regionally-distinctive Victorian treatment in Charles County. Furthermore, it is one of a number of historic resources in the Victorian village of Marbury which grew as a result of the establishment of the Naval Proving Ground in Indian Head.

The single most important and long-lasting industry established in Charles County during this period was the naval ordnance manufacturing plant built at Mattawoman Neck in 1890. The Naval Proving Ground was moved to Mattawoman Neck when transportation from the former Proving Ground at Annapolis to the Naval Gun Factory in Washington, DC became too dangerous. Nearly nine hundred acres of land was purchased for the proving ground, and later supplemented by an additional ten thousand acres on Stump Neck. In 1898, the Naval Powder Factory was constructed, and the first powder was manufactured in 1900. During World War I, transportation to and from the factory was improved by the construction of a railroad spur from White Plains in 1917.

Although the Proving Ground was moved to Dahlgren, Virginia in 1921, the plant continued to operate and began tests that would lead to the development of jet propulsion and rocket testing at the naval station. From the beginning, the plant and proving ground provided an important and stable center of employment for the county. During the war years, the plant expanded, requiring more laborers. The town of Indian Head grew up just opposite the gates of the installation. The Navy contributed to the housing and education of its employees and their children by building housing and a school at Indian Head.

Marbury was connected to the proving ground at first by a locally built narrow footbridge and after 1917 by a unique hand drawn footbridge that allowed coal barges to proceed upstream in Mattawoman Creek. Congressman Sydney Mudd was the driving force behind the federally funded footbridge construction stating that, "The purposes of this bridge is to afford direct and convenient communication to the government employees, for nearly 50% of them have homes on the Marbury side of the Creek. Further evidence of the impact on the proving ground to the adjoining region can be found in census records from 1890-1920. Not only was the election district of Pomonkey, including Indian Head and Marbury, the only area of growth. Between 1910 and 1920 the population nearly doubled from 1589 to 3,124. In 1920, a new census district was established in Marbury having a population of 1,392. (1)

The village of Marbury is situated on high ground on the former plantation of the Marbury family. During the early 20th century, Marbury included a post office and barber shop as well as Twiford's Store and Lumber Yard. Most of the town residents were in some way dependent on Indian Head for their livelihood.

Ernest Skinner purchased the property in 1906. Twenty years later the 1.76 acres including improvements was purchased at public auction by Peter L. Wheeler. In 1968, his widow Sadie and heirs sold 1.74 acres and the dwelling to Mary R. Fowler. The current

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No CH-758

Name Ernest Skinner Property

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

---

owner acquired the property in 1979.

### Endnotes

(1) Carlisle, Rodney. Powder and Propellants. Energetic Material at Indian Head, Maryland, 1890-1990. pg. 96.

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

Inventory No. CH-758

---

## 10. Geographical Data

---

Acreage of surveyed property ~~1906~~

Acreage of historical setting 1.74

Quadrangle name Indian Head

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

---

Verbal boundary description and justification

The site is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 20, Parcel 368, Grid 22.

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Cathy Hardy/Historic Preservation Planner

organization Charles County Planning

date 4/24/2003

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town La Plata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville MD 21032  
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH- 758

Section 8 Page 1

Ernest Skinner Property  
name of property  
Charles County, MD  
county and state

---

**Chain of Title:**

- 1998 By and between Esther May Memmer, as to an undivided 99% interest, and Dennis E. Posey, as to an undivided 1% interest, to Esther May Memmer and Dennis E. Posey, joint tenants. 1.74 acres. Buildings and improvements.  
**2515/267**
- 1997 Esther May Memmer, as to an undivided 99% interest to Dennis E. Posey, as to an undivided 1 % interest. 1.74 acres.  
**2451/398**
- 1979 Rebecca W. Kelly and Clarence S. Kelly, her husband, to Esther May Memmer. 1.74 acres. Buildings and improvements.  
**643/169**
- 1975 Rebecca W. Kelly to Rebecca W. Kelly and Clarence S. Kelly, her husband, as tenants by the entireties. 1. 74 acres. Buildings and improvements.  
**388/81**
- 1968 Sadie J. Wheeler, widow; Rebecca Kelly and Clarence Kelly, her husband; Willard W. Wheeler and Cecelia E. Wheeler, his wife; and Fern A. Cleary and James Cleary, Jr., her husband to Mary R. Fowler, unmarried. 1.74 acres. Buildings and improvements.  
**196/193**
- 1926 Joseph H. Howard, sheriff of Charles County MD, by virtue of an execution issued by the Circuit Court of Charles County, MD (dated 2/24/1926) to Peter L. Wheeler. 1.76 acres. Buildings and improvements. Purchased at public auction.  
**45/165**
- 1906 By virtue of a Power of Attorney for Addison Marbury from John T. Skinner and Maggie Skinner, his wife (FDM 16/67) and Sylvester Skinner to Ernest E. Skinner. 8 acres.  
**16/673**





CH-758 Charles County, MD  
Name: SKINNER Prop  
Location: MARBURY  
Quad: INDIAN HEAD





CH-758  
Ernest Skinner Property  
Charles Co, MD

10/2002

MD SHPO  
LOOKING E

10/24



CH-758  
Ernest Skinner Property  
Charles Co, MD  
10/2002

MD SHPO  
REAR ELEVATION  
20pg





CH-758  
Ernest Skinner Property  
Charles Co, MD  
10/2002  
MD SHPO  
GARAGE 30F4



CH-758

ERNEST SKINNER PROPERTY

CHARLES CO, MD

10/2002

MD SAPO

CHICKEN 1/3

4004